



HARTFORD COMMUNITIES
THAT CARE

CT HVIP
COLLABORATIVE
WORKING TOGETHER TO EXPAND THE HVIP SAFETY NET

February 17, 2023

Respectfully Submitted to the Connecticut General Assembly **COMMITTEE ON FINANCE, REVENUE AND BONDING.**

The Connecticut Hospital Violence Intervention Program Collaborative (CT HVIP) a program of Hartford Communities that Care, appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony concerning SB 5653, AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN EXCISE TAX ON AMMUNITION TO PROVIDE FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY GUN VIOLENCE AND INTERVENTION PROGRAM GRANTS. The CT HVIP supports the bill.

My name is Johanna Schubert, I serve as the Director of the Connecticut Hospital Violence Intervention Program Collaborative (CT HVIP) at Hartford Communities that Care (HCTC). The Collaborative works to expand and strengthen the safety net of Hospital Violence Intervention Programs across the state. Our work, in collaboration with the legislature, and other partners such as the Connecticut Hospital Association has helped establish Connecticut as a national leader in violence prevention policy.

Hospital Based Violence Intervention (HVIP) is a specific, evidence-based methodology that involves partnerships between hospitals and frontline and community agencies. In 2004, Hartford Communities that Care and Trinity Saint Francis Hospital established the first recognized HVIP partnership in the state of Connecticut, and 6th in the nation to be recognized by the Health Alliance for Violence Intervention (The HAVI) Since that partnership formed, they have served more than 2,200 victims and their families.

During the 2022 legislative session, the CT HVIP collaborative advocated for a permanent commission to continue to advise the legislature on evidence based and community centered violence prevention strategies. Signed into law in the Spring of 2022, the commission is tasked with advising the Connecticut Department of Public Health on a new statewide community gun violence intervention and prevention program, which will provide state grants to community-based violence intervention organizations. Several members of the CT HVIP Collaborative from across the state and across different areas of specialty have been appointed to sit on this commission. The program is being administered by the Department of Public Health's Office of Injury and Violence Prevention and was allocated \$2.9 million in the fiscal year 2023 budget adjustment bill. The department will also begin a robust evaluation of best practices to assist organizations in spending these resources most effectively.

SB 5653, which places an excise tax on ammunition, would provide an additional source of funding to be allocated through the Commission. As stated in their report, more sustainable resources are needed to combat the public health issue that is gun violence. Continuity of funding provides for stability of programming in community centered and evidence-based interventions.

At the CT HVIP and Hartford Communities that Care, we understand the devastating impact that trauma can have on those vulnerable to gun violence. We also know that with dedicated and sustainable

revenue generated by legislation such as that proposed in SB 5653 we can make a greater impact in slowing the rates of violence. For those reasons we are in support of this bill.

Please don't hesitate to be in touch with any questions,

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